This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

defining areas of ownership for users of a computer system, said areas of ownership comprising areas in which said users have permission to modify security policy configurations;

receiving a proposed modification of one or more of said security policy configurations from a first user of said users, said first user being an owner of said proposed modification, wherein a set of said users are stakeholders in said proposed modification; and

receiving decisions from a selected set of said stakeholders on approval of said proposed modification.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising providing a list of said stakeholders to said owner.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 2 further comprising receiving a selection of said set of said stakeholders from said owner.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 3 further comprising providing a notification to said set of said stakeholders of said proposed modification.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein at least one of said set of said stakeholders rejects said proposed modification.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5 further comprising providing a rejection notification to said owner.

7.   (Original)   The method of Claim 1 further comprising determining if all necessary approvals have been received.

8.   (Original)   The method of Claim 7 wherein said determining if all necessary approvals have been received comprises determining if said set of said stakeholders approved said proposed modification.

9.   (Original)   The method of Claim 8 wherein said set of said stakeholders approved said proposed modification if all stakeholders of said set of said stakeholders approved said proposed modification.

10.   (Original)   The method of Claim 7 wherein a determination is made that said all necessary approvals have been received, said method further comprising granting said owner permission to implement said proposed modification.

11.   (Original)   The method of Claim 10 wherein said owner implements said proposed modification.

12.   (Original)   The method of Claim 1 further comprising:
receiving a notification of said proposed modification;
reviewing said proposed modification; and
entering a decision of said proposed modification.

13.   (Original)   The method of Claim 12 further comprising amending said proposed modification.

14.   (Original)   The method of Claim 1 further comprising assigning an ownership of said proposed modification from said owner to a new owner.

15.   (Currently amended)   A method comprising:

defining areas of ownership for users of a computer
system, said areas of ownership comprising areas in which said
users have permission to modify security policy configurations;
receiving a proposed modification of one or more of said
security policy configurations from a first user of said users,
said first user being an owner of said proposed modification;
determining that said owner has permission to implement
said proposed modification; and
providing a permission notification to said owner.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 15 wherein said owner
implements said proposed modification upon receiving said
permission notification.

17. (Currently amended) A method comprising:
submitting a proposed modification of one or more security
policy configurations;
receiving a list of stakeholders in said proposed
modification;
selecting a set of said stakeholders; and
determining if permission to implement said proposed
modification has been granted.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 17 wherein upon a
determination that said permission to implement said proposed
modification has been granted, said method further comprising
implementing said proposed modification.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 17 further comprising
receiving approval decisions on said proposed modification from
said set of said stakeholders.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 17 further comprising
making said proposed modification.

21.   (Currently amended)   A system comprising:

a means for defining areas of ownership for users of a computer system, said areas of ownership comprising areas in which said users have permission to modify security policy configurations;

a means for receiving a proposed modification of one or more of said security policy configurations from a first user of said users, said first user being an owner of said proposed modification, wherein a set of said users are stakeholders in said proposed modification; and

a means for receiving decisions from a selected set of said stakeholders on approval of said proposed modification.

22.   (Currently amended)   A computer-program product comprising a tangible computer-readable storage medium containing computer program code comprising:

a multi-user participation role based administration application for defining areas of ownership for users of a computer system, said areas of ownership comprising areas in which said users have permission to modify security policy configurations;

said multi-user participation role based administration application for receiving a proposed modification of one or more of said security policy configurations from a first user of said users, said first user being an owner of said proposed modification, wherein a set of said users are stakeholders in said proposed modification; and

said multi-user participation role based administration application for receiving decisions from a selected set of said stakeholders on approval of said proposed modification.

23.   (Currently amended)   A computer system comprising:

a memory having stored therein a multi-user participation role based administration application; and

a processor coupled to said memory, wherein execution of said multi-user participation role based administration application generates a method comprising:

defining areas of ownership for users of a computer system, said areas of ownership comprising areas in which said users have permission to modify security policy configurations;

receiving a proposed modification of one or more of said security policy configurations from a first user of said users, said first user being an owner of said proposed modification, wherein a set of said users are stakeholders in said proposed modification; and

receiving decisions from a selected set of said stakeholders on approval of said proposed modification.

24.   (New)   The method of Claim 1 wherein said security policy configurations comprise configurations selected from the group consisting of firewall configurations, anti-virus application configurations and intrusion detection system configurations.

25.   (New)   The method of Claim 1 wherein said areas of ownership further comprise areas in which said users have permission to modify network configurations of physical network structures used to interconnect devices.

26.   (New)   The method of Claim 1 wherein an area of ownership for said first user is a first network and an area of ownership for a first stakeholder of said stakeholders is a second network, said proposed modification comprising a reconfiguration of a firewall policy of a firewall in said second network.